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ABSTRACT

A study to determine international information, opinions, and orientations of junior and senior high school students in Kentucky is described. The sample included 1,391 students who responded to a self-administered survey. Results indicate that young people are moderately interested in international affairs, males more so than females; television is the dominant source of international news; and students have a passing degree of international knowledge. Also, students have a pessimistic/realistic view that conflict will have a central role in international affairs, but they oppose the use of force to settle disagreements. They rank the United States and Russia about equal in power, but give Russia the edge in the future growth of power. Males are more power oriented than females and are more likely to sanction the use of force. Finally, the students reject isolationism and believe that the United States should remain in the United Nations. The conclusion is that, in terms of international orientations, students may be more sophisticated than often believed and that some of the simplistic and outdated international education curricula may not be adequate to meet student needs of the future. (Author/KC)

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THE NEXT GENERATION: INTERNATIONAL ATTITUDES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KENTUCKY

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ABSTRACT

Patterns of political learning and socialization among youth have received the attention of scholars for some time. Until recently most of this research has focused on orientations to national politics and the national political system. Now some interest has developed in studying international and global perspectives of youth. The present study describes the results of an extensive survey of international information, orientation and beliefs among junior and senior high school students in Kentucky. The survey, based on 1391 respondents, reveals attitudes of youth on such matters as international conflict and peace, relative power relationships among nations, foreign aid, the United Nations, and international interest and information sources.

INTRODUCTION

It has become a cliche to say that the future belongs to the young. But however trite, it remains true that the youth of today will provide both the citizens and the leaders of tomorrow. For this reason, and to gain insight into the overall process of learning and development, political scientists have been concerned with studying political socialization among younger persons.

Primary attention in the literature on political socialization and learning has been on the development of beliefs, attitudes and orientations of children toward the political institutions and authorities of the nation state. Over the last twenty years a growing body of research has emerged which has made political socialization a distinct subfield in the discipline of political science. Among the more notable contributions have been those by Hyman (1959), Hess and Torney (1967), Greenstein (1965), Easton and Dennis (1969), and Dawson and Prewitt (1969), while edited compilations have been produced by Dennis (1973) and Renshon (1979). As a result, we now have some understanding of the processes and agencies through which individuals are politically socialized or take on the norms and values of the political community.

However, relatively less attention has been devoted to the development of international or world views in individuals. As recently as 1971, it could be said that in spite of the growing interest in political socialization, "there has been no parallel interest, nor have any large scale studies been performed, in the area of childhood orientation toward international relations and our nation's role within that realm." (Button, 1971). Early work on the development of national identity and inter-nation differences was done by Piaget (1951) and Jahoda (1963); childrens attitudes about war and international conflict have been assessed by Tolley (1973), Alvik (1968) and Cooper (1965); and general assessments of the international orientations of young people have been provided by Targ (1970), Morrison (1967), Remy, et.al (1975) and Torney (1974) among others. The National Council for the Social Studies has taken some interest in this subject and in cooperation with the Committee on Pre-Collegiate Education of the American Political Science Association has sponsored some research on the role of the schools in international education. Still, much remains to be done.

It is clear that the nations of the world grow increasingly interdependent and that no nation, including the United States, can be truly self-sufficient and autonomous. Given this reality it is important to know more about the developing orientations of young people today with respect to this global environment. How they view the world and the role of the United States in relation

to other nations is an important ingredient in any effort to project political analysis into the future. This paper will explore some original survey data gathered from a sample of junior and senior high school students in Kentucky on their international information, opinions and orientations. The objective will be primarily descriptive and is intended to be an addition to the currently limited data base in this area.

SAMPLE AND METHOD

This paper reports the results of a survey of attitudes and opinions of students from junior and senior high schools in Kentucky. The self-administered survey instruments were completed during April and May, 1979 at a wide range of schools throughout the central and western parts of the state. The final sample included 1391 respondents representing twenty-one different schools. Although not a scientifically drawn sample, the group of respondents are sufficiently numerous and from sufficiently diverse schools to yield a result which can be considered representiative of students in Kentucky. The survey instrument contained twenty-five items, nearly all with multiple choice response alternatives. The results were coded, key-punched and entered into a computer for machine processessing. For the purposes of this paper, basic descriptive analysis with appropriate statistical tests have been performed with the data.

INTERNATIONAL INTEREST, KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION SOURCES

As a border state in the interior of the nation, Kentucky does not have a reputation for broad international interactions and experiences. In view of this, one objective of the study was to seek an assessment of the international interests and understanding of Kentucky students. Another goal was to see how closely students follow news about world affairs, what their major sources of information are about world affairs, and how much attention they thought the schools should devote to this subject.

Junior and senior high school students are generally perceived as being concerned with things that seem to directly effect them such as school work, friends, sports and dating. The international environment is relatively far away and requires some effort on the part of students to relate to it. When asked to identify the most important problem facing the nation, most students in the survey (56.4%) pointed to the essentially domestic issue of inflation and the economy. However, of next importance were energy (20.0%) and the danger of war (9.0%), both of which reflect international concerns. Of course, a question like this is quite sensitive to events and the recent Iranian crisis would undoubtedly make international concerns of substantially greater importance if the survey were taken today.

In order to determine the level of interest that Kentucky students have in international matters they were asked the following question. "In general, how much interest do you have in current world affairs: much interest, some interest, little interest or no interest?" A significant majority of 61.7% gave the moderate response of "some interest", 17.5% said they have "much interest" while 17.9% reported having "little interest." Only 2.9% said they have "no interest" in world affairs. The results, broken down by sex and grade level are shown in Table 1.

It seems clear that, among students, international affairs are not of top priority, a result which is not surprising. On the other hand, only one-fifth claim little or no interest, which has to be taken as an encouraging sign by those concerned with international education. There are no statistically significant differences in international interest between junior and senior students, although younger students are somewhat more likely to indicate little or no interest. With regard to sex, there is a modest, but significant relationship with international interest. Boys are more likely than girls to indicate "much interest" in world affairs, a finding consistent with Hyman (1959) on general public affairs interest.

In a related question, the students were asked the following: "Some people feel that it is important to know what is happening in other countries. Other people are more interested in their

TABLE 1

International Interest Levels (n=1391)

	Much Interest	Some Interest	Little Interest	No Interest	Stat. Sig. <.01
All Respondants	17.5%	61.7%	17.9%	2.9%	
Grade: Jr. High	16.5	59.6	20.8	3.1	
Sr. High	18.1	63.0	16.1	2.8	no
Sex: Girls	13.3	65.6	19.6	1.5	
Boys	22.3	57.1	16.0	4.6	yes

own country. How about you? How often do you talk with others, such as parents, teachers or friends about what other countries are doing?" The responses to this question, which are shown in Table 2, were fairly evenly distributed among the alternatives "several times a week" (28.8%), "about once a week or so" (35.1%) and "almost never" (32.6%) with the remaining group (3.5%) saying they didn't know.

On this question there is a greater differentiation than on the above interest question with more students moving to the two opposite ends of the scale. There are both a large number of students who discuss international matters frequently and another large group who almost never discuss such issues. The largest group, however, as with the interest question above, evidence a moderate amount of concern for matters relating to foreign countries.

Table 2 also reveals that responses to this question were significantly related to both grade level and sex. Senior high students are somewhat more likely to discuss international events than are junior high students. And boys report discussing world affairs more frequently than girls. Such findings indicate that as students grow older, their perspective broadens to include matters beyond national borders. This is probably based on the growing recognition that what other countries are doing can effect them at home. Sex differences may reflect traditional sex

TABLE 2

Frequency of Discussing other Countries (n=1391)

	Several Times Week	Once a Week	Almost Never	Don't Know	Stat. Signif. $<.01$
All Respondents	28.8%	35.1%	32.6%	3.5%	
Grade: Jr. High	24.2	35.5	36.7	3.6	
Sr. High	31.5	34.8	30.2	3.4	yes
Sex: Girls	24.8	35.2	37.4	2.6	
Boys	33.7	34.9	27.1	4.3	yes

role stereotyping which tends to direct the attention of girls to local and domestic matters while responsibility for following events in the larger world environment is seen as falling on males.

The students in this study were also asked to identify their "major source of news about current affairs." While their parents' generation might have indicated newspapers or even radio as a major source of information, these students overwhelmingly report that they get their news from television. Fully sixty-one percent (61.0%) identified television as their main source of current affairs information and another 11.3% named television in combination with some other medium. Only 10.4% rely primarily on newspapers and 9.2% report radio as their major source of news. A few scattered responses point to parents, friends or other sources. The results are shown in Table 3.

Clearly, this is the television generation. We learned during the Vietnam conflict how realities of war on the other side of the world could be brought into living rooms accross the nation. The socializing impact of that experience is yet to be fully measured. Most of these students are probably too young to have experienced the Vietnam coverage by television, but subsequent international events have received very extensive television coverage.

TABLE 3

SOURCE OF CURRENT AFFAIRS NEWS (n=1391)

	Newspaper	Television	Radio	Parents, Friends	Multiple Response	Don't Follow News	Stat. Sig. <.01
All Respondents	10.4%	61.0%	9.2%	6.1%	11.3%	2.0%	
Grade: Jr. High	10.4	59.8	6.0	6.2	14.9	2.2	
Sr. High	10.4	61.7	10.9	5.9	9.2	1.8	yes
Sex: Girls	10.2	59.6	10.1	5.9	12.1	2.0	
Boys	10.7	62.7	8.3	6.2	10.2	1.9	no

Questions about the socializing impact of television are more easily raised than resolved. We know that youth of today spend a great deal of time watching television and according to this survey, they are aware of how important television is to them as a source of information. There is no doubt that television is an unmatched medium for bringing images and information about distant events to individuals in a dramatic fashion. Because of television, youth now are exposed to more information about world affairs than ever before. Exactly how this has effected their international orientations, however, remains uncertain.

There are no significant differences on the basis of grade level or sex with regard to sources of information on current affairs. All point to television as their primary source of news.

As an indication of the quality of information that Kentucky students have about international matters, the survey included two information questions. In one they were asked to identify the current U.S. Secretary of State from a list that included Henry Kissinger, George McGovern, Cyrus Vance and Edward Kennedy. In the other, they were asked to pick out the largest country in South America from a list that included Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Venezuela.

A large majority of the students were able to correctly answer both of these relatively easy questions. Three-fourth (75.1%) of the respondents identified Cyrus Vance as Secretary of State and nearly as large a group (73.9%) correctly selected Brazil as the largest South American country. These very limited indicators would suggest at least a modest level of knowledge of world affairs among these students. Of course, these two questions are quite inadequate for any full evaluation.

As shown in Table 4, when breaking down the results by grade level and sex we find some significance to the former but none to the latter on these questions. Senior high students are significantly more likely to know that Vance is Secretary of State than younger students. However, their knowledge of Western Hemisphere geography is really no better than junior high students. Sex of respondents is not significantly related to knowledge levels on either of these questions. Although Tolley (1977, p. 395) found sex differences in information levels about the Vietnam War, no such differences appear here. Perhaps Tolley's results were influenced by the character of the issue tested (i.e. Vietnam War), which may have had greater inherent interest for boys than girls (see Remy, et.al., 1975, p. 33 and below).

Table 4

International Affairs Knowledge (n=1391)

(A)Secretary of State

	Kissinger	McGovern	Vance	Kennedy	Stat. Sig.<.01
All Respondents	14.5%	5.7%	75.1%	4.4%	
Grade: Jr. High	21.8	7.1	65.0	6.1	
Sr. High	10.2	4.9	81.0	3.4	yes
Sex: Girls	15.5	5.5	73.9	4.9	
Boys	13.2	6.0	76.6	3.9	no

(B)Largest South American Country

	Mexico	Brazil	Argentina	Chile	Venezuela	Stat. Sig.<.01
All Respondents	14.6%	73.9%	7.5%	1.9%	2.0%	
Grade: Jr. High	17.7	71.1	7.8	1.8	1.6	
Sr. High	12.8	75.5	7.3	1.9	2.2	no
Sex: Girls	14.0	73.2	8.5	2.0	2.1	
Boys	14.9	74.8	6.4	1.8	1.9	no

INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND THE BALANCE OF POWER

A central issue in the interrelations of nations has always been the question of war and peace. Related to this is the *real-politik* considerations of national power and the power relationships among the major states. In order to assess student perceptions of the character of the international environment, the status of the United States relative to other nations, and the role of force in foreign policy, a series of questions on these issues were included in the survey. The orientation of young people on the question of war and peace has been the subject of several studies. Among the more notable have been those by Tolley (1973, 1977), Alvik (1968), Haavelsrud (1970) and Mercer (1974). Although some areas of agreement emerged from these studies, there remains considerable conflicting information about attitudes and beliefs of young people in this area.

In a general question designed to elicit student views of the nature of the international environment, and possibly also tap their optimism/pessimism, they were asked, "Looking to the year ahead, do you think the world will be mostly at peace or will there be many conflicts among nations?" A majority of the respondents (57.0%) see the world as more likely to be conflictual rather than peaceful, 23.9% think the nations of the world will be mostly at peace, while the remaining 19.1% were not sure. Most students see the interactions of the nation-states of the

TABLE 5

PREDICTION OF WORLD PEACE/CONFLICT (n=1391)

	Peaceful	Conflictual	Don't Know	Stat. Sig. <.01
All Respondents	23.9%	57.0%	19.1%	
Grade: Jr. High	23.8	57.3	18.9	
Sr. High	24.0	56.8	19.2	no
Sex: Girls	22.9	56.6	20.5	
Boys	24.8	57.6	17.6	no

world as more likely to involve conflict, at least part of the time. As such their views reflect a "realistic" or realpolitik as opposed to an "idealistic" image of the world. Additonally, the result could be interpreted as representing an essentially pessimistic vision of the future of international politics.

These distributions along with a breakdown by grade level and sex are shown in Table 5. As can be seen, there are no significant differences between junior and senior high students or between boys and girls in response patterns to this question.

Although there is a toleration for, and even expectation of, conflict among nations in the world system, this "realism" does not extend to a justification for using force indiscriminately in foreign relations. Kentucky students in this study were asked to respond to the following statement" "Some people say that if another nation does not agree with us, we should sometimes fight." They were given the options of strongly agreeing, agreeing, disagreeing, strongly disagreeing, or not sure. Most students (45.0%) disagreed with the statement and an additional large group (27.8%) strongly disagreed. Just 10.2% agreed and an additional 3.6% strongly agreed with this fairly aggressive statement. The remaining 13.5% were not sure.

This suggests that although the students see the world as a conflictual place with lots of fighting, they don't particularly

like it that way. Most will not sanction the use of force to settle mere disagreements between the United States and other nations. Under what other circumstances they might sanction going to war, of course, is not ascertained. However, it is clear that these young people reject an aggressive foreign policy posture and, at the least, prefer great restraint in the use of force. Table 6 displays the results of responses to the question.

In comparing junior and senior high student responses to this question, we find no clear pattern of differences. However, with regard to sex there is a clear and significant difference of opinion on justification for the use of force in foreign relations. Boys are more likely than girls to agree that fighting is sometimes alright while girls are more likely than boys to disagree. Such a pattern is consistent with the findings of Cooper (1965) and Greenstein (1965) although Tolley (1971) found no sex differences in support for the Vietnam War. For whatever reason, among Kentucky students girls more strongly reject fighting and war while boys are somewhat more likely to accept them. However, the more important finding is that a majority of both sexes disagree with fighting as a means to resolve international disagreements.

In order to gain some insight into student perceptions of the current and future status of the United States relative to other

Table 6

U.S. Should Fight Over International Disagreements (n=1391)

	Strong Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strong Disagree	Stat. Sig. <.01
All Respondents	3.6%	10.2%	13.5%	45.0%	27.8%	
Grade: Jr. High	4.0	9.7	10.7	42.1	33.6	
Sr. High	3.3	10.5	15.1	46.7	24.4	no
Sex: Girls	1.8	6.7	10.9	46.0	34.7	
Boys	5.6	14.2	16.4	44.0	19.8	yes

major nations, a series of questions on power rankings were included in the survey. Students were asked to rank the United States, Russia and China as the most powerful, one of the most powerful, as powerful as other large countries, one of the least powerful or not powerful. Then they were asked to project into the future and indicate whether they thought the power of the three countries would increase, decrease or stay the same. The results of these questions are shown in Table 7.

Kentucky students are slightly more likely to rank Russia as the most powerful country (13.3%) compared to the United States (10.5%) with China rated most powerful by less than 1%. The United States is ranked as one of the most powerful countries by 63.9% while Russia is so categorized by 59.9% and China by 30.6%. The most common ranking for China, with 41.4%, is that this nation is "as powerful as other large countries." Students see the United States and Russia as possessing about equal power, although the latter might be seen as marginally ahead. China is clearly seen as a second level power. The post World War II days when the United States was seen as the preeminent world power are over in the eyes of this new generation. This country is perceived as being equalled now by Russia in a basically bi-polar world.

More striking are the perceived trends in power relationships. Looking to the future, nearly half (49.9%) of the students

Table 7

Comparative National Power (n=1391)

(A) Current Power Rankings

	The Most Powerful			One of Most Powerful			Equal to Other Large Countries		
	U.S.	Rus.	China	U.S.	Rus.	China	U.S.	Rus.	China
All Respondents	10.6%	13.3%	0.7%	63.9%	59.9%	30.6%	17.4%	14.8%	41.1%
Grade: Jr. High	9.3	15.4	1.4	62.2	53.1	27.4	19.7	17.0	38.1
Sr. High	11.4	12.1	0.3	64.9	63.9	32.5	16.0	13.5	42.9
Sex: Girls	7.3	9.8	1.1	62.8	56.8	28.1	20.2	17.6	39.9
Boys	14.3	17.3	0.3	65.5	63.7	33.6	13.9	11.6	42.5

One of Least Powerful			Not Powerful			Don't Know			Stat. Sig.<.01
U.S.	Rus.	China	U.S.	Rus.	China	U.S.	Rus.	China	
3.1%	2.5%	14.1%	0.1%	0.7%	2.1%	4.8%	8.8%	11.2%	
3.0	3.2	17.2	0.0	0.8	2.4	5.9	10.7	13.6	
3.1	2.1	12.3	0.2	0.7	2.0	4.2	7.8	9.9	no
3.3	3.4	15.0	0.1	0.8	1.8	6.3	11.5	14.1	
2.9	1.1	13.0	0.2	0.6	2.5	3.2	5.7	7.9	yes

Table 7 (continued)

(B) Projected Future Power

	Increase			Decrease			Stay Same		
	U.S.	Rus.	China	U.S.	Rus.	China	U.S.	Rus.	China
All Respondents	36.4%	49.9%	39.5%	18.0%	7.5%	8.2%	40.1%	28.8%	35.8%
Grade: Jr. High	40.7	48.0	35.6	17.3	7.7	8.9	36.6	29.3	38.1
Sr. High	33.8	51.0	41.8	18.5	7.4	7.8	42.2	28.4	34.4
Sex: Girls	30.7	42.8	31.4	19.0	8.2	7.8	44.3	31.1	39.7
Boys	42.8	58.4	48.8	17.1	6.6	8.6	35.2	25.9	31.4

Don't Know			Stat. Sig. $<.01$
U.S.	Rus.	China	
5.5%	13.8%	16.5%	
5.3	15.0	17.2	
5.6	13.1	16.0	no
6.0	17.9	21.1	
4.9	9.0	11.1	yes

believe Russia will increase her power while only 36.4% see the United States doing so. On the other hand, 18.0% see American power decreasing compared to only 7.5% who predict a decline in Russian power. A substantial group (39.5%) also see Chinese power on the increase in the future.

In sum, the image of the United States as dominant world power has changed for these young persons. This nation is now seen as sharing the top rung in the world heirarchy of nations with Russia and the power projections of these students seem to carry the implication of the United States slipping to second place in the future. Such opinions are far from the naive, idealistic and nationalistic images often associated with the unsophisticated. Instead, it could be said that these student assessments are quite consistent with those of world political and military experts and thus are very "realistic" perspectives. In any case, it is clear that these students do not live under any illusions about an invincible America.

There are no significant differences in opinions on these questions based on grade levels. Junior and senior high students have essentially the same outlook. However, there are some interesting differences based on sex. Boys are consistently more likely than girls to be "power-oriented" on international politics. They are more likely to rank both the United States and Russia as the most powerful country and they are more likely than

girls to project power increases for all three countries in the future. This suggests a sex-based difference among students in their interest in power and their willingness to think in terms of power and competition among nations. It is apparently also consistent with the sex differences in international aggressiveness discussed above.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND THE UNITED NATIONS

In addition to being characterized by international conflict and power relationships, the world environment also includes the peaceful and cooperative interactions of nation states. The survey included questions dealing with this aspect of international relations including general student orientations and their attitudes about the United Nations and foreign assistance programs of the United States.

In order to assess the general isolationist/internationalist orientations of these young people, they were asked the following question: "Do you think it would be better for the United States to keep independent in world affairs--or would it be better for the United States to work closely with other nations?" By a more than two-to-one margin, the respondents chose the internationalist, cooperative strategy. A significant majority (56.8%) think

it is better for the United States to work closely with other nations while only 25.1% advocate the isolationist course of going it alone internationally. The remaining 18.0% were not sure.

This response pattern is significant because Kentucky, as a "heartland" state located in the nation's interior, is often regarded as harboring parochial, isolationist sentiments. The strong endorsement by students for an internationlist strategy for the nation is therefore somewhat surprising and should give pause to those who carry the above-mentioned stereotype about Kentucky. As suggested elsewhere, these students have a farily sophisticated view of world affairs and their responses to this question would suggest a recognition of the reality of interdependence among nations. Most see cooperating with other nations as the best approach for the United States in conducting foreign affairs and view an isolationist approach as impractical. Table 8 shows the responses to this question.

The internationalist preference is found among all students regardless of grade level or sex with no significant differences appearing in response patterns among these groups.

Two questions were included which relate to evaluations of the United Nations. The United Nations is the most prominant of a large number of international organizations which have emerged in

Table 8

U.S. Isolationalist and Internationalist Perspectives (n=1391)

	U.S. Should Keep Independent	U.S. Should Work With Others	Uncertain	Stat. Sig.<.01
All Respondents	25.1%	56.8%	18.0%	
Grade: Jr. High	22.3	59.0	18.5	
Sr. High	26.8	55.5	17.8	no
Sex: Girls	24.9	55.4	19.7	
Boys	25.4	58.3	16.1	no

Table 9

Evaluation of United Nations Performance (n=1391)

	Good Job	Poor Job	Uncertain	Stat. Sig.<.01
All Respondents	40.1%	32.4%	27.2%	
Grade: Jr. High	41.7	30.8	27.2	
Sr. High	39.2	33.4	27.2	no
Sex: Girls	42.8	27.4	29.6	
Boys	36.7	38.6	24.4	yes

the contemporary international environment. It symbolizes the multi-national, cooperative approach to dealing with international problems and has also been a focal point of criticism for those frustrated with its inadequacies in solving problems.

The questions relating to the United Nations were; "In general, do you think the United Nations is doing a good job or a poor job in trying to solve the problems it has had to face?" and "Do you think the United States should give up its membership in the United Nations, or not?" Other studies have found a "consistent, generally positive attitude toward the United Nations" among American youth (Remy, et.al., 1975, p. 21). The results of this survey show a similarly positive opinion of the United Nations among Kentucky students. A plurality of 40.1% think the United Nations does a good job at what it tries to do, although a very substantial group of 32.4% rate the United Nations job performance as poor. The remaining 27.2% are not sure how to rate the organization.

Students in Kentucky lean toward a favorable view of the United Nations' work although there are many who remain critical. Given their general preference for international cooperation discussed above, this criticism may reflect a combination of opinions from two different groups. It may include, on the one hand, the 25% of respondents who want the United States to go it alone internationally combined with, on the other hand, those who favor

international cooperation but are frustrated by the shortcomings of the United Nations in achieving its goals.

The overall result as well as a breakdown by sex and grade level is shown in Table 9. There is no significant difference in evaluations of the job done by the United Nations between junior and senior high school students. However, there is a clear difference in the opinions of boys and girls. Girls are more likely than boys to endorse the work of the United Nations, while boys are more likely than girls to say the organization has done a poor job. In fact, a plurality of boys give the United Nations a negative rating and it was only the relatively strong endorsement of the girls that brought the overall result to a positive plurality. The support of girls for the cooperative effort represented by the United Nations is consistent with some of their views on conflict and aggressiveness discussed above. While boys are more likely to be "power-oriented" and think in terms of international "realism", girls appear to be more "idealistic" and prefer the cooperative approach to international problems that the United Nations represents.

The other question relating to the United Nations is the perennial issue raised by some conservatives in this country of United States withdrawal from the United Nations. In response to this question we find that an overwhelming majority of 78.8% do not want this country to give up its United Nations membership.

Only 5.1% advocate giving up membership with the remaining 16.1% uncertain. Thus, although many students feel the United Nations is doing a poor job, nearly all think that the United States should remain a member and by implication that the organization should continue. As shown in Table 10, there are no substantial differences of opinion on this question based on grade level or sex although boys are somewhat more likely to advocate withdrawl from the United Nations than are girls.

The foreign aid programs of the United States have sometimes been controversial although in ideal form they represent a cooperative approach to international relations. Respondents in this study were asked their opinions of foreign aid. "In general, how do you feel about the United States giving aid or assistance to other countries -- are you for it or against it?" A majority of 55.7% responded to this general question that they favor foreign aid, while 29.2% were against it and 15.1% were uncertain. Thus, most of these young people support the idea of the United States sharing some of its resources with other nations, a basically cooperative and internationalist perspective consistent with the responses to the isolationism/internationalism question discussed above. The results of this question are found in Table 11.

When dividing the respondents by grade level and sex, some significant differences in responses emerge on this question. Junior high students are more likely than senior high students to

Table 10

U.S. Membership in United Nations (n=1391)

	Should Give Up	Should Keep	Uncertain	Stat. Sig.<.01
All Respondents	5.1%	78.8%	16.0%	
Grade: Jr. High	6.6	78.3	15.1	
Sr. High	4.2	79.2	16.6	no
Sex: Girls	3.8	78.7	17.5	
Boys	6.7	79.0	14.3	no

Table 11

Opinion of U.S. Foreign Aid (n=1391)

	Favor	Oppose	Uncertain	Stat. Sig.<.01
All Respondents	55.7%	29.2%	15.1%	
Grade: Jr. High	62.1	23.8	14.1	
Sr. High	51.9	32.4	15.6	yes
Sex: Girls	59.9	25.8	14.3	
Boys	50.9	33.2	15.9	yes

favor foreign aid (52.1% compared with 51.9%) and girls are more likely than boys to support this kind of international assistance (59.9% compared with 50.9%). Younger students and girls are somewhat more likely to take the more "idealistic" and cooperative option on the foreign aid question. Again, this tendency is similar to that identified in some of the previous items.

In addition to a general evaluation of foreign aid, of course, it is helpful to know the particular types of foreign assistance that are supported. A follow-up question was asked in which students identified specific examples of the types of foreign aid they would support. The largest group (51.5%) supported assistance when it is limited to food, agricultural, medical and educational programs. A significant group (29.4%) will also support such more basic infrastructure programs as building highways, railroads and factories. But only a small group (12.7%) favorably identified aid programs aimed at "helping to build up the military strength of other nations". Thus, students who support foreign aid favor the more "benevolent" and "humanitarian" types of assistance and shy away from military aid. There were no significant differences by grade level or sex in the responses to this question.

SUMMARY

The significance of international affairs to all of us has increased dramatically over the last fifty years. We are no longer isolated as a nation from other nations and as we have become acutely and sometimes uncomfortably aware, events in distant nations over which we have little control can effect us quite directly and immediately right in on our home towns and daily lives. Since this interdependence is likely to become a fixed feature of our social, economic and political environments, it is important to learn more about the socialization of youth into this environment. The objective of this study has been to provide some descriptive analysis of the international attitudes and perspectives of students in Kentucky.

Among the findins are that young people are moderately interested in international affairs, boys more so than girls; that television is far and away the dominant source if international news; and that students have a passing degree of international knowledge, although this was not fully tested. Students have a pessimistic/realistic view that conflict will have a central role in internatinal affairs, but they oppose the use of force to settle disagreements. They rank the United States and Russia about equal in power now, but give Russia the edge in the future growth of power. Boys are more "power-oriented" in international politics than girls and more likely to sanction the use of force.

Kentucky students reject isolationism and believe the United States should remain in the United Nations. Most also believe the United Nations does a good job, although boys and girls differ. Girls are more favorable to the United Nations and boys are more critical.

What can we conclude from this? While students may lack complete and accurate information on international affairs, they are far from being unsophisticated parochials in international outlook. They seem to have a surprisingly realistic view of the nature of the international environment. Given the pervasive character of television, its role in shaping these attitudes cannot be discounted.

Of course, the schools will remain a major agent of student socilization to the international system. While half of the respondents in this survey thought the amount of international education in the schools was adaquate, the other half was divided three-to-one in favor of more international content in the classroom. The schools do need to do more conscious work in global education. However, this data suggests that in terms of international orientations students may be more sophisticated than often believed and that some of the simplistic and outdated international education curricula of the past may not adaquately meet student needs for the future.

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